

The Federal Budget

The fiscal health of the United States has reached a crisis point. Eight years of the Bush administration's irresponsible policies have left the United States with a deep recession, a broken budget, and large deficits. From his position on the House Budget Committee, Congressman Blumenauer is working with Congressional leadership and the Obama Administration to repair this damage and chart a responsible and sustainable fiscal course for the nation.

As the Congressional Budget and Appropriations process unfolds, Congressman Blumenauer will continue to work for a strategic and effective government that keeps America strong and safe, repairs our economy, sustains a strong safety net for our elderly and vulnerable populations, preserves our environment, and lays the groundwork for future prosperity.

Since coming to Congress in 1996, Congressman Blumenauer has based his fiscal policies on five basic principles:

- Fair tax relief for working Americans.
- Funding commitments to our children, seniors, veterans, and the environment.
- Honoring our promises to present and future Social Security and Medicare recipients.
- Paying down our national debt — currently at over \$11 trillion and growing.
- Avoiding future funding shortfalls.

A member of the House Budget Committee since 2007, Congressman Blumenauer is ideally positioned to advance his vision for a responsible balance of federal revenue and expenditure, including targeting government waste and advocating for sound infrastructure financing, health care reform, and energy independence.

For more information on the work of the House Budget Committee, visit the [Budget Committee website](#).

Fiscal Responsibility

In 2007, Congressman Blumenauer's first year on the Committee, the new Democratic majority approved a resolution that proposed balancing the budget by 2012 and reversing six years of harmful spending cuts and fiscal mismanagement. Although the economic downturn has made government spending critical both to supporting vulnerable individuals and creating jobs, the Congressman remains committed to prudent government investment.

He also strongly supported the reinstatement of the Pay-as-you-go Rule in 2007. PAYGO, as it is known, requires all new mandatory spending or tax changes to be offset equally elsewhere in the budget. The 1990s statutory pay-as-you-go rule was a valuable tool in helping to turn then-record budget deficits into surpluses by the early part of this decade, but was allowed to expire by Congressional Republicans in 2002.

The Congressman also strongly supports an end to budget gimmicks and a return to "honest budgeting." Congressman Blumenauer firmly believes that expected expenditures, such as the operations in Iraq and Afghanistan and the cost of patching the Alternative Minimum Tax (AMT), should appear within the government's base budget. The Congressman believes such honest budgeting is vital for charting a sound, long-term plan for government spending and revenues.

Congressman Blumenauer strongly criticized the abuse of the appropriations process under the Bush administration and Republican Congress, and is committed to creating a transparent appropriations process, particularly regarding state and local projects. In 2007, the Congressman endorsed the new Democratic majority's ethics reforms that require public disclosure of Member projects, or "earmarks." In fact, the Congressman exceeded requirements to disclose funded projects and certify an absence of financial interest in each request by publishing his list of Fiscal Year 2009 requests on his website for full public review.

Learn more about Congressman Blumenauer's list of Fiscal Year 2009 projects for Oregon [here](#).

The Congressman continues to support efforts to introduce accountability and transparency into the "earmark" process and applauds the House Leadership's commitment to further reduce funding of these projects in Fiscal Year 2010 to levels 50 percent below Fiscal Year 2006 levels.

Learn more about Congressman Blumenauer's list of Fiscal Year 2010 projects for Oregon [here](#).

Government Accountability

The Congressman has used his position on the Committee to root out waste in government. He has called for a review of the cost-effectiveness of the Medicare Advantage program and a

thorough examination of the costs of military operations and reconstruction in Iraq and Afghanistan. He was also an early voice calling for investigations into the increase in government debt held by foreign investors, including foreign governments.